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ET, UK  
SUBJECT: SOMALIA/HOA: UK MINISTERS REVIEWING POLICY

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Daniel McNicholas, reasons 1.  
4 (b/d).

¶1. (C/NF) Summary. Newly arrived Foreign Office East Africa and Great Lakes Director Jonathan Allen previewed July 14 for Poloff the discussions UK officials have teed up for ministers to have on Somalia at their July 21 Cabinet sub-committee on Africa meeting. Disrupting the al-Shabaab network is the UK's top priority in Somalia, and supporting the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) appears at present the best way to do that, Allen said. While the security track of TFG support is important, so is the political track.

The international community equally needs to support it and ensure the TFG is working to bring as many groups as possible into the fold, as well as delivering services to Somalis. Undermining al-Shabaab is going to require more coordination, and Allen welcomes more discussions with the USG about how to do that, especially in ways that "don't have our fingerprints on it." The UK is exploring ways to support the regions of Somaliland and Puntland more. As with Cyprus, Allen said, "a lot of work can be done without state recognition." The problem with piracy is the risk versus reward ratio, and the international community needs to do more to make piracy more risky, especially for Puntlanders who are "up to their eyeballs in it." On Eritrea, Allen said the UK is "happy to join the consensus," though caveated that he doesn't have much hope in engagement and thinks it is time to pursue sanctions on named individuals who are providing support for al-Shabaab. Kenya is important, he said, and the U.S. and UK should coordinate more on levers to push reform, including visa bans and other mechanisms. End summary.

¶2. (C/NF) Coming from a Home Office Counter-Terrorism office, newly arrived Foreign Office East Africa and Great Lakes Director Jonathan Allen previewed July 14 for Poloff the discussions UK officials have teed up for ministers to have on Somalia at their July 21 Cabinet sub-committee on Africa meeting. Allen said the Foreign Office (FCO) has been working to develop a more comprehensive Somalia strategy, which Ministers will consider, along with some short-term mechanisms of support for the TFG. Allen replaced James Tansley, who is now head of the FCO's Pan-Africa Policy Unit and had only been in the East Africa and Great Lakes Director position for a couple of months, because, as one HMG official put it, "Tansley was well out of his depth."

Somalia: Disrupting al-Shabaab,  
TFG Needs to Deliver Services  
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¶3. (C/NF) Disrupting the al-Shabaab network is the UK's top priority in Somalia, Allen said, and it seems that the TFG and its security forces, as supported by AMISOM, are the best way to do that. However, undermining al-Shabbaab is going to require more coordination, and Allen welcomes more

discussions with the USG about how to do that, especially in ways that "don't have our fingerprints on it."

¶4. (C/NF) At the same time, Allen said, the international community needs to pursue the political track. If the TFG is going to survive, it needs to begin offering relevant services to Somalis and focusing on its own legitimacy. It should also be working to bring as many Somali groups in the country and in the Diaspora into the fold as possible. Citing an example where the TFG is off-base in its focus, Allen said a TFG minister recently officially requested UK assistance in bolstering the TFG's maritime law capacity to lodge a legal complaint against the Kenyan Government over fishing rights and maritime jurisdiction. Allen acknowledged that was important, but that the TFG should be focused on security and basic service delivery at this point.

#### Somalia: Working With, But Not Recognizing The Regions

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¶5. (C/NF) Turning to Somaliland and Puntland, Allen said the UK plans to "thicken" the UK's assistance to the regions, especially Somaliland in order to support the pockets of security that exist. Allen said it would also be important for Somaliland to demonstrate its commitment to democracy through elections, a message which the UK Government has been communicating to the Somaliland Government. Allen, having previously worked on Cyprus issues, noted that "a lot of work can be done without state recognition," and the UK will encourage the Somaliland Government to broaden its discussion with the international community beyond the issue of

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recognition. Allen acknowledged difficulty in supporting the Puntland authorities because some many are involved in piracy. He suggested the problem with piracy is the risk versus reward ratio, and the international community needs to do more to make piracy more risky, especially for Puntlanders who are "up to their eyeballs in it."

#### Eritrea: Unhelpful, What Next? Sanctions?

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¶6. (C/NF) Allen acknowledged the "unhelpful" role that Eritrea is playing in Somalia and in the region. He noted, however, that he was not sure that Eritrea's support for al-Shabaab, while helpful, had been "critically important" to al-Shabaab's fight in Somalia. He said the UK is "happy to join the consensus" on how the international community decides to deal with Eritrea and is skeptical of recent Italian attempts for greater engagement. While it is fine to see if engagement works, Allen said he thinks it is time to pursue sanctions for named individuals who are involved in Eritrea's support to al-Shabaab, but through a graduated approach that would give the Eritrean's another opportunity to re-engage before full sanction regimes are put in place. He also said, unlike others in the UK Government, that he did not think resolution of the Ethiopia-Eritrea border dispute would meaningfully reduce Eritrea's level of nefarious activity in Somalia or the region.

#### Kenya: Important to Push Reform

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¶7. (C/NF) Allen said that Kenya was important and the UK Government wanted to coordinate more on pushing reform forward, possibly even through coordinated visa/travel bans. He would like to work more to see what levers are available and work together to convince some of the EU's more reticent states, like Italy, that sticks may be needed.

